



NEWS RELEASE

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INS to move operations

OMAHA, NE December 21, 2001 – The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) Omaha district office announces plans to move their fingerprinting and Information Services operations.

On December 26, 2001, the Omaha district's fingerprinting and Information Offices will move to the Millard Plaza, 13822 T Plaza, Omaha. The Millard Plaza is located at 138th and "Q" Streets. The fingerprinting and Information Offices are currently located next to the main district office at 3736 S. 132nd Street. The new facility will be operational and open to the public beginning January 2, 2002. The district office will service customers during this period of transition. The INS Information Office is where alien residents of Nebraska and Iowa can file applications, inquire on the status of their applications and obtain employment authorization cards if eligible. Tom DeRouchey, Deputy District Director said "we are anticipating a smooth transition to the new facility, however customers should anticipate some delays. We do not anticipate closing our information services during this move, however if individuals can wait until January 2 they should do so. The construction of the new facility is on track and we anticipate only minor inconveniences." The new facility will be located in the Southeast corner of Millard Plaza with construction being completed by the Paragon Construction Company.

Those individuals with appointments for interviews will continue to report for their scheduled interviews at the location provided for on their schedule notice. The Omaha district has steadily seen increased workloads as the state populations continue to grow. District Director Jerry Heinauer said "this fiscal year beginning in September our information office in Omaha will see approximately 2000 individuals a month for information services alone. This new facility will provide our customers a better atmosphere with a large parking area while waiting to complete their business with the INS."

In addition, Heinauer stated that the Des Moines INS Office is now providing additional services to those residents in Iowa needing immigration services. The Des Moines Office is now able to provide, to eligible aliens, employment authorization documents. Currently, those individuals needing employment authorization documents were required to travel to Omaha. Said Heinauer "for those living in the eastern parts of Iowa, the need to travel to Omaha for immigration services has been difficult. The ability of the Des Moines Office to provide these new services should prove to be a substantial benefit for those residents." Heinauer stated that since beginning this new service in Des Moines, the number of customers has also increased to an average of 1400 customers a month. Residents of Nebraska or Iowa needing immigration services can now go to the office nearest their residence, either Omaha or Des Moines to file applications or receive employment authorization documents.

Hours of operations in the new facility will be, Information Counter will remain the same, 8:00AM to 2:00PM on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays (The Information Counter is closed on Wednesdays). The

fingerprint office will remain the same, 8:00AM to 3:30PM Monday through Friday. The entire facility will close on all official Federal Holidays.

The Omaha district adjudicated 6,673 applications for employment authorization in FY 2001 compared to 4,620-employment authorization documents in FY 2000. The information counters in Omaha and Des Moines provided information, assistance and accepted benefit applications from approximately 33,850 customers this last year. In FY 2001, the INS's Application Support Center programs in Omaha and Des Moines fingerprinted more than 19,000 customers seeking various benefits.

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